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SOUTH MOLTON  
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Annual Report

OF THE  
Medical Officer of Health  
AND THE  
Sanitary Inspector

FOR THE  
Year ended December 31st, 1946.

F. J. H. MARTIN,  
M.R.C.S.(Eng.), L.R.C.P.(Lond.), D.P.H.(Oxon),  
Medical Officer of Health.



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113, East Street,

South Molton,

July, 1947.

*To the Chairman and Members of the  
South Molton Rural District Council.*

*Mr. Chairman and Members of the Council.*

*I have the honour to present the Annual Report  
on the Health and Sanitary Administration of your  
District for the year 1946.*

*Your obedient Servant,*

**F. J. H. MARTIN,**

*M.R.C.S.(Eng.), L.R.C.P.(Lond.), D.P.H.(Oxon),*

**Medical Officer of Health.**

# ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE SOUTH MOLTON RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

For the year ended December 31st, 1946.

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## LIST OF STAFF.

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The Staff of the Public Health Department consists of:—

### Part-time Officers:—

F. J. H. MARTIN,  
M.R.C.S.(Eng.), L.R.C.P.(Lond.), D.P.H.(Oxon),  
Medical Officer of Health.

H. J. ELWORTHY, Clerk.

### Whole-time Officers:—

A. G. OXLAND, L.R.I.B., A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.,  
Sanitary Inspector.

L. W. EVES, A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.,  
Additional Sanitary Inspector.

## Statistics and Social Conditions of Area.

Area in acres	...	...	...	...	...	117,432
Population (Registrar General's figures)	...	...	...	...	...	8,565
Inhabited Houses	...	...	...	...	...	2,779
Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	...	£28,297
Sum represented by a penny rate	...	...	...	...	...	£120

### Vital Statistics.

	Males	Females	Total
LIVE BIRTHS—Legitimate	65	74	139
Illegitimate	4	3	7

Birth rate per 1,000 population	- 17·0	<u>146</u>
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	Males	Females	Total
STILL BIRTHS—Legitimate	1	1	2
Illegitimate	0	0	0

Rate per 1,000 total live and still births	- 13·5	<u>2</u>
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	Males	Females	Total
DEATHS	70	74	144

Death rate per 1,000 population	- 16·9
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### Deaths from Puerperal Causes.

Puerperal Sepsis	...	...	0
Other Puerperal Causes	...	...	0

The Table appended shows the comparative figures for South Molton Rural District and England and Wales:—

Rate per 1,000 population			Death Rate per 1,000	Infant Mortality per 1,000 live births	
	Live Births	Still Births		Deaths under 1 year	Deaths from Diarrhoea and Enteritis under 2 years of age
South Molton R. D. ...	17·0	0·23	16·9	47	0
England and Wales ...	19·1	0·53	11·5	43	4·4



## Deaths of Infants under 1 year.

					Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	...	...	...	...	3	4	7
Illegitimate	...	...	...	...	0	0	0
							<hr/>
							7
							<hr/>

Rate per 1,000 live births	...	...	...	...	47
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births					50.3
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	...	...	...	...	0
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	...	...	...	0
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	...	...	...	...	0

## Deaths over 65 years of age.

65—70	...	12	80—85	...	4
70—75	...	27	85—90	...	9
75—80	...	20	90—95	...	3
				Over 95	2

## Causes of Death.

					Males	Females
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	1	0
Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	1	1
Influenza	...	...	...	...	2	1
Cancer of Oesophagus	...	...	...	...	1	0
Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum	...	...	...	...	2	1
Cancer of Breast	...	...	...	...	0	2
Cancer of all other Sites	...	...	...	...	6	5
Diabetes	...	...	...	...	0	1
Intracranial Vascular Lesions	...	...	...	...	8	13
Heart Disease	...	...	...	...	29	23
Other Diseases of Circulatory System	...	...	...	...	3	2
Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	4	4
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	3	2
Gastric Ulcer	...	...	...	...	0	1
Nephritis	...	...	...	...	4	5
Premature Birth	...	...	...	...	3	0
Congenital Malformations, Birth Injury,						
Infantile Diseases	...	...	...	...	0	4
Suicide	...	...	...	...	1	1
Other violent causes	...	...	...	...	0	2
All other causes	...	...	...	...	2	6
					<hr/>	<hr/>
					70	74
					<hr/>	<hr/>

## Cases of Infectious Disease notified in 1946 (excluding Tuberculosis).

Twelve notifications of Infectious Disease were received during the year as follows:—

4 cases Pneumonia	...	ages 5 months, 33, 58 and 70 years.
2 cases Scarlet Fever	...	ages 9 and 24 years.
2 cases Erysipelas	...	ages 52 and 60 years.
1 case Measles ...	...	age 1 year.
3 cases Whooping Cough .		ages 3, 5 and 7 years.

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12

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### Tuberculosis.

New cases of Tuberculosis notified during the year:—

PULMONARY ... 7      NON-PULMONARY ... 1

#### AGE GROUPS.

10—15 years	...	1	5—10 years	...	1
20—25 „	...	2			
35—40 „	...	1			
50—55 „	...	1			
55—60 „	...	2			
		<hr style="width: 50px; margin-left: 0;"/>			<hr style="width: 50px; margin-left: 0;"/>
		7			1
		<hr style="width: 50px; margin-left: 0;"/>			<hr style="width: 50px; margin-left: 0;"/>

### Diphtheria Prophylaxis.

The number of children immunized during the year was 360 as follows:—

Under 5 years of age	...	...	90
Between 5 and 14 years	...	...	160
Reinforcement doses	...	...	110

The Ministry of Health now considers that a treatment remains effective for 5 years and advise further treatment every 5 years during the child's school life.

The material used was A.P.T.

# GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES.

## Professional Nursing in the Homes.

There are five District Nurses in the area stationed at Chulmleigh, Witheridge, Bishop's Nympton, North Molton and Burrington.

## Laboratory Facilities.

These are provided by the Devon County Council at Exeter and are of the greatest service to the District and the Medical Profession.

## Infectious Diseases.

The Isolation Hospital is at Tiverton.

## The V.D. Clinic.

This is held at the North Devon Infirmary (Annex), Barnstaple.

### SESSIONS.

<i>Females</i> —Thursdays, 4.45 p.m.	<i>Males</i> —Thursdays, 5.45 p.m.
Fridays, 3.30 p.m.	Fridays, 4.30 p.m.

## Ambulance Service.

The South Molton and District Ambulance is manned by the St. John Ambulance Brigade.

I took up my duties on November 8th, succeeding the late Dr. Mortimer. I desire to record my best thanks to Mr. Willey and to Mr. Oxland for the help they have given to me.

F. J. H. MARTIN.



# ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SANITARY INSPECTOR AND SURVEYOR FOR THE SOUTH MOLTON RURAL AREA

For the Year ended 31st December, 1946.

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## Water.

The introduction of the Regional Scheme promoted by the North Devon Water Board is looked forward to as the solution of the water supply difficulties in this area, as where water is supplied through mains, generally speaking, it is inadequate during times of drought.

The position during the past year in places where water supply systems exist and particulars of the sources from whence the water is derived are as follows:—

CHULMLEIGH.—The source of the water supply at Chulmleigh is mainly a collecting area, but the water from this source is speedily affected by dry weather. Some years ago a borehole was sunk to augment this supply, but the yield from this has become progressively less and it was necessary during the year under review to restrict the consumption by turning off the water for several hours of the day after dry spells. The water both from the collecting area and the borehole contains iron in solution in considerable quantities and aeration, sedimentation and slow sand filtration is resorted to for removal of this. The raw water has a plumbo solvent action and before being passed into the mains, it is made to flow through a neutralizing chamber, where p.H. the value is raised to a satisfactory degree.

WITHERIDGE.—The supply at Witheridge is derived mainly from an adit into which springs are collected and conveyed to a reservoir. Here again this supply is speedily affected by weather changes and in an effort to augment this supply, a borehole was sunk several years ago, which, whilst satisfactory for a time, now yields but very little water. Subsequent to the sinking of this borehole, other springs were collected at Woodford Moor as a temporary measure and a pumping plant is installed to pump the water to the village. No treatment other than that necessary to raise the p.H. value of the water from Woodford Moor is undertaken.

KINGSNYMPTON.—The supply at Kingsnympton is derived from a borehole, the yield from which was originally about four times the estimated consumption. The present yield, however, is barely sufficient to satisfy the requirements of the consumers and there is no doubt but that the borehole is producing a very much decreased quantity of water than it was originally anticipated would be obtained from it. This is apparent both during the summer and winter months, and there are considerable periods of the year where consumption has to be restricted to a few hours supply per day. No treatment is undertaken.

RACKENFORD.—The supply of water at Rackenford, also derived from a borehole, is very meagre in quantity, both during winter and summer months. The Council has for some time past had under consideration means for the augmentation of this supply and the North Devon Water Board have sanctioned the preparation of a scheme with this object in view. No treatment is undertaken.

BISHOPSNYMPTON.—The supply for this village also is derived from a borehole and this met all demands, no curtailment of consumption being necessary. This water also contains iron in solution which is taken out by aeration, sedimentation and slow sand filtration.

NORTH MOLTON.—The supply at North Molton is derived from springs on Exmoor, and the only trouble we experienced with this supply is as a result of the reservoir being inadequate in size. Originally it was considered the yield from the springs was more than sufficient to meet requirements and as a consequence nothing more than a small tank at the intake was provided. During recent years, however, it has been found during the dry months that this tank becomes practically empty during the day, but overflows to waste during the night. The Council have taken steps to remedy these conditions and tenders have been invited for the construction of a service reservoir of about three days capacity. When this has been constructed, providing no abnormal demands are made on the available supply, it is not anticipated that any further trouble will be experienced with the supply. No treatment of the water is undertaken.

BRAYFORD.—The source here is derived from a spring which is conveyed to a small storage tank and from thence to the village. Whilst there is a sufficiency of water at the source, the pipes are corroded to an extent as to seriously impede the flow, which results in some houses being deprived of water. A scheme has been prepared and a tender provisionally accepted for the re-laying of the mains and as the head is very low, opportunity is to be taken



to increase this by raising the water to a reservoir at a higher level by means of a hydram. This will facilitate the erection of houses in the village which are required and provide water to existing houses at a reasonable pressure. No treatment is undertaken.

GEORGENYMPTON.—A scheme for the supply of piped water to this village, the preparation of which has been sanctioned by the North Devon Water Board, is to be promoted, as a shortage of water from existing sources, which are wells, is experienced at every dry period. The proposal is to abstract water from the river Mole, raise it to a high level reservoir where it will have to be satisfactorily treated, from whence it will gravitate to the village.

GENERALLY.—The remainder of the district relies for its supply on small Estate Schemes and wells.

Two samples of water were taken from piped supplies during the year, both of which proved satisfactory and apart from these samples, no other samples were taken from piped supplies as there was nothing to indicate any conditions which would reverse previous results.

The water at Chulmleigh has a plumbo solvent action which is neutralized as previously explained, and slight plumbo solvency is apparent in the water from Woodford Moor supplying Witheridge, which has also been previously mentioned. No contamination of any of the piped supplies has arisen necessitating special action.

20 per cent. of the dwelling-houses in the district are supplied from public water mains direct to the houses and 4·2 per cent. of the total number of dwelling-houses in the district are supplied by standpipes from public mains. This represents 21 & 4 per cent. of the population respectively.

Particulars of work in connection with water supplies carried out during the year are as follows:—

Number of inspections carried out in connection with private supplies ...	47
Number of samples taken from existing supplies ... ..	12
Number satisfactory ... ..	8
Number of water supplies improved ...	3
Number of water supplies taken into houses from public mains ... ..	4
Number of visits to and inspections of public water supplies ... ..	72

## **Draining and Sewerage.**

Apart from sewers laid in connection with housing schemes, no works of sewerage and sewage disposal have been carried out during the year. Eleven inspections of Sewage Disposal Works have been made and particulars of drainage work carried out during the year are as follows :—

Number of new drains laid	...	...	12
Number of extensions to drains	...	...	4
Number of drains cleared	...	...	9

Schemes of Sewerage and Sewage Disposal are necessary in several places and desirable in others. Instructions have been given for the preparation of a scheme for Chulmleigh which is badly needed.

## **Closet Accommodation.**

Number of new closets constructed	...	...	3
Number of earth closets converted to water closets	...	...	2
Number of new closet pans fixed	...	...	5
Number of new flushing cisterns provided	...	...	5

## **Public Cleansing.**

House refuse is collected from the following villages by Contract and deposited in local dumps, viz.:—West Buckland, Chittlehampton, North Molton, Chulmleigh, Witheridge, Bishopsnympton and Georgenympton.

A scheme for the collection of refuse in the village of Rackenford was considered, but this had to be dropped on account of the fact that we could not obtain the services of anyone to collect.

## **Salvage.**

The Salvage Scheme having proved very expensive to operate in this district, owing to the high cost of collection, the Council gave instructions that activities in this direction should cease, and as a consequence no salvage has been collected this year.

## **Nuisances.**

Twelve nuisances have come the Department's notice during the year and they were all dealt with by informal action, abatement having been obtained.

## **Eradication of Bed Bugs.**

No premises were found to be infested with bed bugs.

## **Schools.**

No complaint as to schools were made during the year and no matter requiring the intervention of the department was found.

## **Infectious Diseases.**

### **Disinfection and Disinfestation.**

Six premises were disinfected as a result of the occurrence of notifiable diseases and two premises were disinfested following flea infestation.

### **Inspection and Supervision of Food.**

Hitherto District Sanitary Inspectors have undertaken the duty of Sampling Officers on behalf of the County Council in connection with designated milk supplies, but the County Council have now appointed their own full-time sampling officers and as a consequence the number of samples taken this year show a large decrease from previous years. Sixteen samples were submitted for examination for cleanliness of which fourteen reached the required standard. All the samples were taken at farms at the time of production, the percentage of passes, viz.:—87·5 was an improvement on last year's percentage, which was 67·75 and that of the year before 84·88.

101 inspections of cowsheds have been made and in spite of difficulties with the lack of labour and materials, a considerable number of sheds have been re-modelled or otherwise brought up-to-date. Many new entrants are coming into the liquid milk market and the practice of the War Agricultural Executive Committee in calling for a report from the Local Authority on the suitability of the premises before recommending the Milk Marketing Board to grant a licence is commendable.

### **Slaughterhouses and Meat.**

No slaughterhouses in the district are in use.

413 $\frac{1}{4}$  lbs. of home-killed butcher's meat was condemned during the year, the cause of condemnation being bone taint and decomposition, chiefly bone taint.

30 lbs. 12 ozs. of imported butcher's meat was condemned from the same causes.



The following additional foods were condemned :—

Canned Peas ...	...	...	...	7 cans.
„ Beans	...	...	...	9 „
Stewed Steak	...	...	...	1 can.
Tomatoes ...	...	...	...	1 „
Soup ...	...	...	...	2 cans.
Corned Beef ...	...	...	...	1 can.
Pilchards	...	...	...	1 „
Marmalade ...	...	...	...	2 cans.
Milk ...	...	...	...	4 „
Cheese	...	...	...	11 lbs.
Biscuits	...	...	...	5 $\frac{1}{4}$ „

### Bakehouses.

There are twelve bakehouses in the district which were kept in a satisfactory condition. Defects were remedied in one bakehouse and alterations effected which has caused a great improvement in this bakehouse.

### Factories.

No defects were found in any factories.

### Housing.

The Council's Post-War Housing Scheme was commenced during the year by the letting of Contracts for the following :—

20 houses at Witheridge,
2 „ „ Three Hammers, East Worlington,
4 „ „ East Buckland,
20 „ „ North Molton,

and an additional pair of houses on the Witheridge site. It is interesting to note that this additional pair was erected at the request to the Crediton Rural District Council, who failed to obtain clearance of a site in the Parish adjoining Witheridge. The Council agreed to the suggestion, and are giving Crediton Rural Council the opportunity of selecting the tenants for this pair of houses when they are completed, and they will be occupied by residents in the Crediton area.

Twelve of the twenty-two houses at Witheridge were occupied by the end of the year as also were the pair at Three Hammers, East Worlington.

The following schemes were in course of preparation, and, subject to the Ministry's approval, these will be embarked upon during 1947.

4	houses	at	Filleigh.
6	„	„	Chittlehamholt.
12	„	„	Bishopsnympton.
6	„	„	West Buckland.
4	„	„	Umberleigh.
8	„	„	Rackenford.
4	„	„	West Anstey.

Houses are needed in other Parishes, notably Chulmleigh, but in this instance, site difficulties have prevented any scheme being promoted. It will, however, be a disappointment to the inhabitants and a strain on existing accommodation if no houses are erected in this Parish during 1947.

The number of visits and inspections to existing houses total 152, and the number of cases where repairs were obtained by informal action was 96.

One Notice under Section 11 of the Housing Act, 1936, was served, in respect of a house found to be unfit for human habitation and not repairable at a reasonable expense, and the owner gave an undertaking to render the premises fit for human habitation.

Two Statutory Notices were served for the execution of works in connection with housing accommodation and both are outstanding.

### **Building Licensing.**

The operation of Civil Building Control by the Council in the exercise of powers delegated to them in that connection, has meant a considerable increase in the work of the department and 108 premises were visited in connection with applications for building licences. The number of building licences granted was 235 and the number refused 100.

**A. G. OXLAND, L.R.I.B.A., A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.,**  
*Sanitary Surveyor & Inspector.*

